

# NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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***For Immediate Release***

**JULY 11, 2005**

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today the indictment of eleven individuals in federal charges that address methamphetamine production and distribution around Wayne and White County, Illinois. All eleven are in custody as of 7:00 a.m. after pre-dawn arrests on Friday morning, July 8, 2005.

Those arrested from Fairfield, Illinois, were: **William O. Shelton**, a/k/a Bill Shelton, 41; **Judy K. Ewing**, 61; **Eugenia L. Downs**, a/k/a Genia Downs, 39; **Kevin L. Garrett**, 39; and **Michael Scott McDannel**, 34. Also arrested were: **Thomas W. Cramer**, 33, of Golden Gate, Illinois; **Leslie J. McKitrick**, 36, of Mill Shoals, Illinois; **Russel J. Pragitt**, a/k/a John Pragitt, 39, of Mill Shoals, Illinois; and **Stewart W. Poore**, 43, of McLeansboro, Illinois; Also indicted but currently serving sentences in the Illinois Department of Corrections are **Kevin A. Gill**, 28, of Fairfield, Illinois, and **Eric J. Masterson**, 35, of Burnt Prairie, Illinois. These eleven were added to a previously filed indictment which charged 20 people with methamphetamine production in Wayne County, Illinois.

The indictment alleges that the above-named individuals participated in a conspiracy to manufacture and distribute methamphetamine. The conspiracy is alleged to have existed from the summer of 1995 until June of 2004 in Wayne County, White County, "and elsewhere in the Southern District of Illinois." If convicted by a jury, all defendants face a minimum of 10 years imprisonment up to life imprisonment, a four million dollar fine, and at least five years of supervised release.

An indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.

The agencies involved in the investigation, or which provided information leading to the indictment, were the Southern Illinois Drug Task Force, the Illinois State Police, the Fairfield Police Department, the Wayne County Sheriff's Department, the White County Sheriff's Department, the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department, the COMIT Drug Task Force, Wayne County State's Attorney Kevin Kakak, White County State's Attorney Kerry Sutton, Hamilton County State's Attorney Rod Irvin, the Illinois Secretary of State Police, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, and the United States Marshals Service.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Thomas Leggans, and James Cutchin.